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## MASSACHUSETTS TOMATO FESTIVAL TO CELEBRATE 22<sup>ND</sup> YEAR

If you're a locally-grown tomato fan, mark your calendar for the upcoming **22nd Annual Massachusetts Tomato Festival** slated for Monday, August 21st, 11:00 am to 2:00 pm on Boston City Hall Plaza.

The highlight of the event is the annual tomato contest in which tomato farmers from around the Bay State compete for top honors. Tomatoes from local farms will be judged by a panel of experts on flavor, quality, color and shape. Categories include field tomatoes, cherry tomatoes, heirloom varieties, and heaviest tomato. Winners receive tomato trophies and certificates.

The event kicks-off **Massachusetts Farmers' Market Week** and will include the reading of a Governor's Proclamation, tomato sampling, cooking demonstrations, information on nutrition and local farms, and recipes. Local produce will be for sale at the adjacent Boston City Hall Plaza Farmers' Market. Acclaimed chef Ana Sortun of Oleana Restaurant in Cambridge will be signing copies of her cookbook, *"Spice, Flavors of the Eastern Mediterranean,"* from 11:30 am – 1:30 pm.

Massachusetts Commissioner of Agricultural Resources Douglas P. Gillespie will join Massachusetts Environmental Affairs Secretary Stephen R. Pritchard, Nat Arena of the New England Vegetable and Berry Growers Association, Suzanne Biermann, Regional Administrator for the USDA Food and Nutrition Service, and Mary Kassler of the Massachusetts WIC Program for a brief speaking program and tomato awards presentation at 12:30 pm.

The event is sponsored by the Massachusetts Department of Agricultural Resources, New England Vegetable and Berry Growers Assoc., Federation of Massachusetts Farmers' Markets, in cooperation with the City of Boston Property Management Department.

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